Thou canst not travel on the Path before thou hast become that Path itself.

—*The Voice of the Silence*

THEOSOPHY

VOLUME 62 MARCH, 1974 NUMBER 5

THE LANGUAGE OF THE EGO

WHEN we think of Mr. Judge, it is the simplicity of his explanations that comes most frequently to mind. His illustrations are easy to remember, his advice given in forms of speech that are familiar to all. He seemed to anticipate the questions that ordinary people would ask about Theosophy, and was always ready with helpful suggestions.

His article, "Remembering the Experiences of the Ego," is a good example of these qualities. Who has not puzzled over the subtle states of consciousness to which the Ego is said to withdraw during sleep? We know—or think we know—something about dreams, but in the condition called "deep sleep" the ego, we are taught, enjoys "the experiences of the plane of existence which is peculiarly its own." It is difficult to imagine what that plane is like. There the soul has physical senses no longer, a body no longer, and is, so to say, a being of higher mind for whom time in our sense does not exist. What transactions of thought are possible under such conditions? What feelings are felt, with no nervous system, no emotional endowment of the sort we know, but only the subtle vesture of the ego itself to make a field of awareness?

Are thought and feeling one for such a being? The prism of matter does not divide the unity of consciousness in this state, and the facets of manifestation are still only subjective possibilities—mere "privations," one might say. Yet the life of the Ego on this plane is said to be *real*, and its events are by no means the ephemera of a soul stripped almost to the verge of nonexistence. If we

turn to H.P.B.'s discussion of dreams in the *Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge*, we find this statement:

> . . . the real Ego does not think as his evanescent and temporary personality does. During the waking hours the thoughts and Voice of the Higher Ego do or do not reach his gaoler—the physical man, for they are the *Voice of his Conscience*, but during his sleep they are absolutely the "Voice in the desert." In the thoughts of the *real* man, or the immortal "Individuality," the pictures and visions of the Past and Future are as the Present; nor are his thoughts like ours, subjective pictures in our cerebration, but living acts and deeds, present actualities. They are realities, even as they were when speech expressed in sounds did not exist; when thoughts were things and men did not need to express themselves in speeches; for they instantly realized themselves in action by the power of *Kriya-Sakti*, that mysterious power which transforms instantaneously ideas into visible forms, and these were as objective to the "man" of the early *third* Race as objects of sight are now to us.

Dreams, she says, are "reflections" of the actions of the Higher Ego on this plane, distorted pictures shaped by the idiosyncrasies of individual brain-stuff and the association network of the dreamer. Yet sometimes *something* comes through, and an exalted feeling of having participated in a high experience remains with the awakened human being. The advanced adept, we are told, does not dream, for when the time comes to rest his body he "simply paralyzes his lower Self" and "becomes perfectly free."

In the article by Mr. Judge of which we spoke, he says that in order to remember the experiences of the Ego on higher planes, we have "to learn the language of the Ego." This is necessary in order to make a proper translation to ourselves. But what is this egoic language? Has it a grammar?

> It is not a language in the ordinary sense. It is more nearly described as a communication of ideas and experience by means of pictures. So with it a sound may be pictured as a color or a figure, and an odor as a vibrating line; an historical event may be not only shown as a picture, but also as a light or a shadow, or as a sickening smell or delightful incense; the vast mineral world may not only exhibit its planes and angles and colors, but also its vibrations and lights. Or, again, the ego may have reduced its perceptions of size and distance for its own purposes, and, having the mental capacity for the time of the ant, it may report to the bodily organs a small hole as an abyss, or the grass of the field as a gigantic forest. These are

adduced by way of example, and are not to be taken as hard and fast lines of description.

> Upon awakening, a great hindrance is found in our own daily life and terms of speech and thought to the right translation of these experiences, and the only way in which we can use them with full benefit is by making ourselves porous, so to speak, to the influences from the higher self, and by living and thinking in such a manner as will be most likely to bring about the aim of the soul.

If we have understood correctly what H.P.B. declared concerning the "thoughts of the *real* man"—that they are "living acts and deeds"—then a "language" belonging to that plane must register or repeat vibratory rhythms set in motion by those acts, which, upon reaching our plane, take the form of sounds and colors and generate appropriate symbols, making "a strange tongue" indeed for those who are habituated to quite another mode of thinking and speaking. It is, as Mr. Judge says, "a foreign one to the brain we use, and has always to be translated for use by the brain." The thoughts we are familiar with are "subjective pictures" which we render into forms of speech, and we also make a distinction between the picture or "idea" of a thing and the thing itself.

Explanations of the nature of thought on higher planes throw a light on the use of symbols by the ancient teachers. For example, it is said in *The Secret Doctrine* (I, 307):

> The religious and esoteric history of every nation was embedded in symbols; it was never expressed in so many words. All the thoughts and emotions, all the learning and knowledge, revealed and acquired, of the early races, found their pictorial expression in allegory and parable. Why? Because *the spoken word has a potency unknown to, unsuspected and disbelieved in,* by the modern "sages." Because sound and rhythm are closely related to the four Elements of the Ancients; and because such or another vibration in the air is sure to awaken corresponding powers, union with which produces good or bad results, as the case may be. No student was ever allowed to recite historical, religious, or any real events in so many unmistakable words, lest the powers connected with the event should be once more attracted. Such events were narrated only during the Initiation, and every student had to record them in corresponding symbols, drawn out of his own mind and examined later by his master, before they were finally accepted. Thus was created in time the Chinese Alphabet, as, before that, the hieratic symbols were fixed upon in old Egypt.

From this we might conclude that each one of us carries around in his own nature the keys to ancient symbolism, and that the effort to understand the spontaneous representations that come to us through dream may be regarded as a means to recovery of the ancient knowledge of the language of the soul—a language later formalized through the process described by H.P.B. and also spoken of in her Preface to *The Voice of the Silence*.

Elsewhere in *The Secret Doctrine* (II, 124) H.P.B. refers to the veil of secrecy thrown over occult mysteries during the period which followed the submersion of the last remnant of Atlantis. The sciences, once part of the Mysteries, became exoteric, as is illustrated by Astronomy, known only in its mathematical and physical aspects. When the Fifth Race re-established the religious mysteries, the ancient truths, she says, were "taught to the coming generations under the veil of allegory and symbolism." The secrets had to be preserved, to prevent the terrible misuse of powers precocious to mankind. Yet the symbols, having correspondence to the language of the soul, would be a means of putting of record subtle truths never to be wholly comprehended by the profane, while the outward symbols would remind men of the inner qualities. As H.P.B. has said (I, 473), "since the symbolic formula attempts to characterise that which is above scientific reasoning, and as often far beyond our intellects, it must needs go beyond that intellect in some shape or other, or else it will fade out from human remembrance."

Yet behind those symbolic records and emblematic representations there was the secret language of the soul. In her article, "The Negators of Science," H.P.B. makes it plain that she was able to provide a fresh record of the ancient teachings of the Wisdom Religion through an understanding of that universal tongue. She wrote:

> The Hierophants and Initiates of the Mysteries in the Secret Schools in which all the Sciences inaccessible and useless to the masses of the profane were taught, had one universal, Esoteric tongue—the language of symbolism and allegory. This language has suffered neither modification nor amplification from those remote times down to this day. It still exists and is still taught. There are those who have preserved the knowledge of it, and also of the arcane meaning of the Mysteries; and it is from these Masters that the writer . . . had the good fortune

of learning, howbeit imperfectly, the said language.

It seems evident that "remembering the experiences of the ego" and learning this language would amount to the same thing.

The Non-Dimensional Mind

The Spirit, which is immortal, has an arithmetical, as the body has a geometrical, beginning. This beginning, as the reflection of the great universal Archaeus, is self-moving, and from the centre diffuses itself over the whole body of the microcosm.

Almost a century separated Plato from Pythagoras, so that they could not have been acquainted with each other. But both were Initiates, and therefore it is not surprising to find that both teach the same doctrine concerning the Universal Soul. Pythagoras taught his disciples that God is the Universal Mind diffused through all things, and that this Mind by the sole virtue of its universal sameness could be communicated from one object to another, and be made to create all things by the sole will-power of man. With the ancient Greeks, too, Kurios was the God-Mind (Nous). "Now, Koros (Kurios) signifies the pure and unmixed nature of intellect—wisdom," says Plato in the *Cratylus*. Thus we find all the great philosophers, from Pythagoras through Timaeus of Locris and Plato down to the Neo-Platonists, deriving the Mind-Soul of man from the Universal Mind-Soul.

Basing all his doctrines upon the presence of the Supreme Mind, Plato taught that the Nous, Spirit, or Rational Soul of man, being "generated by the Divine Father," possessed a nature kindred to, or even homogeneous with, the Divinity, and capable of beholding the eternal realities. This faculty of contemplating reality in a direct and immediate manner belongs to God alone; the aspiration for this knowledge constitutes what is really meant by Philosophy—the love of wisdom. The love of truth is inherently the love of good; and predominating over every desire of the soul, purifying it and assimilating it to the divine, thus governing every act of the individual, it raises man to a participation and communication with Divinity, and restores him to the likeness of God.

—H. P. Blavatsky

SPIRITUAL GIFTS AND THEIR ATTAINMENT

ONE of the questions which a Theosophist is apt to ask, and to ask with some earnestness and intensity, is, How can I make progress in the higher life? How can I attain spiritual gifts? For the phrase "spiritual gifts," which is a rather loose-jointed expression, we are indebted to Paul, the Apostle and Adept, who thus wrote to the Corinthian Church: "Concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant." Among the "gifts" which he goes on to enumerate are these,—wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, the working of miracles, prophecy, discerning of spirits, the speaking of divers tongues, and the interpretation of tongues. And while the Apostle urges the Corinthians to "covet earnestly the best gifts," he yet proceeds to show them a more excellent way, namely the supreme law of love. "Now abideth," he says, "faith, hope, charity (or love), these three; but the greatest of these is charity." Spiritual gifts, then, however desirable their possession may be, are plainly not, in the opinion of this good Adept, on the highest plane, not the supreme object of human attainment, or the most excellent way of reaching human perfection. They may doubtless properly be regarded as evidences of advancement on the higher planes of thought and spiritual life, and may be coveted and used for the benefit of others; but they are not in themselves the chief object of human desire. For man's supreme aim should be to become God, and "God is love."

But let us look at the matter a little more closely. In the first place, what is a "gift?" What is the common acceptation of the word? Clearly something given to or bestowed upon a recipient, not something which a man already possesses, or which he may obtain by a process of growth or development. The latter, strictly speaking, would be a "fruit," not a gift. A tree which has been producing nothing but leaves and branches for many years finally breaks out into blossom and fruit. No new "gift" has been conferred upon it; it has simply reached a stage of development in its natural growth where certain powers, inherent in the tree from the beginning,

---

NOTE.—This article was first printed by Mr. Judge in the *Path*, for February, 1889.

have an opportunity to assert themselves. In the same way the transcendental powers possessed by the Adepts are not gifts; but the natural result of growth in certain directions, and the necessary efflorescence, so to speak, of the profound development in their cases of those spiritual potentialities which are the birthright of all men.

Taking this view of the meaning of the word, I think most Theosophists will be ready to admit that the phrase "spiritual gifts" is a misnomer. There are and can be no gifts for man to receive. Whatever the student of the higher life is, he is as the result of his past labors. Whatever he may become in the future will be due to his own efforts. He may develope his latent faculties and in time become an Adept, or he may drift along the currents of life without aim or effort, till he finally sinks into oblivion. His destiny is in his own hands, and is in no way dependent upon "gifts."

Bearing in mind, however, the manifold nature of man, the subject may be looked at from another point of view. For all practical purposes man may be said to consist of body, soul, and spirit, the soul being the true ego, and the spirit one with the Supreme. And regarding these for the time as separate entities, it is perfectly true, as James, another apostle, puts it, that "every good gift and every perfect gift is from above." Every aspiration of the soul for spiritual things, every resolve of the man to lead a purer life, every helping outstretched hand to a weaker brother, every desire for the truth, all hungering and thirsting after righteousness:—these and like yearnings and strivings of the soul have first of all come from above, from the Divine within. In this sense they may be called "gifts,"—gifts from the higher nature to the lower, from the spiritual to the human. And this action of the above upon the below is seen in those humane attributes, or qualities, or virtues—whatever one may be pleased to call them—which Paul in another place enumerates as the "fruits of the spirit—love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance."

Looked at from either of these points of view, how can we attain spiritual gifts? The answer would seem to depend upon what we are really striving for. If the extraordinary powers of the Adepts have captivated our fancy and fired our ambition, then we must possess our souls in patience. Few, if any, of us are at all fitted for a "forcing" process. We must be content to wait and work: to grow and develope: line upon line, precept upon precept,

here a little and there a little, till, ages hence perhaps, we come to the full stature of the perfect man. If, however, wisely recognizing our limitations, we strive instead after what may be termed the ordinary manifestations of the spirit, two obvious lines of conduct suggest themselves.

Every impulse from above, every prompting of the Divine within, should meet at once a hearty welcome and response. If you feel as though something urged you to visit some sick or afflicted neighbor or friend, obey the suggestion without delay. If the wish to turn over a new leaf comes into the lower consciousness, don't wait till next New Year's before actually turning it over; turn it now. If some pathetic story of suffering has moved you, act on the emotion while your cheeks are still wet with tears. In short, put yourself at once in line with the Divine ways, in harmony with the Divine laws. More light, more wisdom, more spirituality must necessarily come to one thus prepared, thus expectant. How can a bar of iron be permeated with the earth's magnetism if it is placed across instead of in line with the magnetic meridian? How can a man expect spiritual gifts or powers if he persists in ignoring spiritual conditions, in violating spiritual laws? To obtain the good, we must think good thoughts; we must be filled with good desires; in short we must *be* good.

And this practical suggestion is to fulfill faithfully and conscientiously every known duty. It is in and through the incidents of daily life, in work well done, in duties thoroughly performed, that we today can most readily make progress in the higher life,—slow progress, it may be, but at any rate sure. These are stepping stones to better things. We advance most rapidly when we stop to help other wayfarers. We receive most when we sacrifice most. We attain to the largest measure of Divine love when we most unselfishly love the brethren. We become one with the Supreme most surely when we lose ourselves in work for Humanity. Dies Non.

FROM "THE THEOSOPHICAL FORUM"

Healing and White and Black Magic: I

Has a mother a right to use her will-power in throwing off disease and the painful result of accidents from herself and children? Please draw the line clearly between white and black magic in such work, occult work?

W.Q.J.—It is not clear from the question whether the querent means to ask about the use of the will pure and simple or about the practice of mind-cure, as it is called, or spiritual healing. In respect to the use of the will considered alone, the editor of *Forum* has replied sufficiently, I think, especially pointing out that the use of that power is not well understood; and it would seem that the questioner does not understand it.

There is a remarkable absence of treatment of the question of the will in such books as the Yoga Aphorisms and the like, the very books where one would expect to see something about it if it is a thing that can be treated of separately. But we may see the reason for this when we remember the old saying of the Kabalists, that "Behind will stands desire." And by considering men as we see them, this saying appears to be a true one, for in everyday life and in every act we perceive that the prime mover is desire, and that the question of weak will or strong will depends on that in nearly every case. The wicked are of strong will because they have strong desires, and the weak person will be found to act with the most powerful will when the desire is strong. Their appearance of being weak arises from the fact that they are pulled about every moment by contrary wishes, not being concentrated enough to have definite wishes of their own. And it is here that the distinction between White and Black Magic can be easily found, for if the desired object be a selfish one or against the general good, then the act performed will be of the nature of Black Magic. The will is only used as an agent to carry out the desire. So in the case of an actual adept of either school, will is at his disposition no matter what be his object.

Now if the question put is in view of the practices of the so-called metaphysical healing schools, then a very different set of

questions arises of mixed nature, some including moral aspects and some not, but every one raising a doubt about the claims made of curative power, as also about the way in which any cures that do take place have been accomplished.

The editor has pointed out that a well balanced and centered mind will conduce to health, as has been held for ages; even savages know this and act accordingly. And if one finds from actual experience that the fact of his or her being of a cheerful, happy, contented, charitable, loving, faithful, sunny disposition will always have the effect of giving health to those about in the family or elsewhere, then there can surely be nothing wrong or inexpedient in such a state. And that, in my opinion, is the right limit for the practice of metaphysical healing. For if one goes beyond that, and, following the rules of these schools, proceeds to send his thoughts out to another with the object of taking hold of that other's mind, then there is the greatest danger and also Black Magic. For no one has the right to take the mind of another, for any purpose, into his possession. If such be done, then the other ceases to be a free agent. And this is true as much in the case of one's child as in that of any other person. Moral wrong attaches here because one is acting on another. But in the event of acting on oneself there can only be a question of expediency, and that is a very wide and important one, since momentous consequences may flow to us and to others from the tendencies we set up in ourselves.

Bodily ailments may be roughly divided for the purposes of the present into two classes, one being those that are acute or due to the imagination or the reaction of the imagination on the processes in the bodily economy; the other being those due to strong physical karma showing out in disease in the mortal envelope, and being entirely beyond the reach of the imagination and not due to reactions from the mind of the sufferer. These last are of the greater number; we see them in small children as well as in adults, and also in savages and the semi-savages of our own civilization who compose what some people call a lower element in the social body.

In the first class the physical troubles from reaction will of course disappear so soon as the person trains himself to look at life cheerfully and to grow into a more independent frame of mind. The cures are not due to the causes assumed in the schools we refer to. They come about as a natural result of the new state of

mind withdrawing from the nerves and fluids of the body the old strain and oppression. When those are removed the actual state of health at the bottom comes to the surface. And the result would be the same in the instance of the most degraded savage who might be induced by accident or by the words of his medicine man to fix his mind in another direction. Obviously there it would not be due to a system of philosophy. And additional proof of this is to be had in the very schools we speak of. In those we see widely different systems; one requires faith in the Bible and in Jesus, and the other does not, and yet each makes equal claim to success. H. P. Blavatsky says: "This is all the secret. Half, if not two-thirds, of all our ailings and diseases are the fruit of our imagination and fears. Destroy the latter and *give another bent to the former, and nature will do the rest.*" [1]

In the second class of diseases it is quite true, as has been often said by the metaphysical healer, that the disease comes from thought, but the error is in supposing it to be present thought had in this body. The thoughts are those of a past life, and have passed altogether from the mind plane into the realm of causes for dynamic disturbance, or of tendency, that are quite beyond the reach of the present imagining power, but sure to result in the course of time in visible difficulty suddenly appearing, or resulting from our going into situations that bring to us the germs of disease. For Karma acts on us not only in inherited troubles but also in accord with the tendencies we have set up in ourselves in a previous life. Those latter impel us to go to places or to mix with such people as that the inevitable result will be to cause effects on our mind or body that otherwise would not be felt. As in the case of one who set up in a previous life a tendency to consort with good and cultured people; this will come out and lead to a similar line of action with very different results from the case of one whose tendencies were in the opposite direction.

These causes for disease then being in the mind plane from the last life, and having become mechanical causes in this, are now *on their way out* of the system in the proper channel, and that channel is a physical, mechanical one. They are leaving us by the way of the body, are on the way down, and should not be stopped and sent back to the mind plane again. They should be treated by the

---

[1] Lucifer, Vol. 7.

ordinary methods of hygiene, of medicine, of surgery, of food. Hygiene and food furnish the right conditions for adjustment, and make no new present cause for trouble; medicine helps nature in her mechanical acts of purging and alteration; and surgery replaces dislocations, removes dead tissues, or puts bones that are broken into position for proper joining. No one would be so foolish as to say that thinking will remove from the brain the pressure of a fractured bone that is making the patient mad, or that imagination will set a dislocated shoulder. And if rotting food in the stomach is affecting the head and the whole system, it is certainly wiser to get rid of the offending substance as quickly as possible, supplying the body with good food in its place, than to let the evil stay to be absorbed as evil into the tissues while one busies himself by calling on the higher powers of mind to make him think he is not disturbed while nature is going on with her cure. In many cases this latter is all that happens, for any strong-minded person can resolve to endure great pain during the process of rectification of internal trouble by ordinary change of tissue and of fluids. So a disciple of the schools in question may be so full of the notion that mind, or God, or Christ is curing him that he endures until the *vis medicatrix naturae* has done its work.

Granting that these causes are on their way down and out, the effect of calling with a powerful will on the same plane of power is that the cause may be sent back to the inner mind and disappear from the body. But this is no cure: it is something like one's cutting off his hair because the flies walk in it, it is planting once more in our deathless body disease that will surely come out again in another life as disease, or as madness in that one or presently in this. And in the life of many a practitioner nowadays this has happened. For wherever one is very sensitive the practices enjoined create abnormal states that have resulted in dementia.

But a still more pressing danger lies in the half-truth of the practices. They are, divested of all pretension to systematic and right philosophy, partially correct yoga practices.

As soon as they are begun they set up in the astral currents in the practitioner definite changes that at once begin to react on the humors and fluids in the body and are strong enough to bring about definite alteration in the physical envelope. This has been known for ages and has been treated of by the older Hindus. But they have always been careful to say that they ought not to be gone on

with in the absence of a guide who is competent to know every symptom, to note every effect, and to give the right corrective.

These correctives were not purely mental either, for many of them have to be physical, since the rapidity of the changes and the effects of the practices far outrun any application of mental correction in many instances. And this knowledge did not mean a mere following of a definite rule, but included an ability to see the peculiarities of each person as he proceeded. For as each is under a different set of laws peculiar to himself, the strict following of a general rule would lead to the greatest danger.

But what do the "metaphysical healers" know of this?

Nothing but the vague rule of the doctors that one must watch the patient and know, if possible, something of his medical record. Outside of that they are at sea with no pilot. They are inviting the explosion of forces they know nothing about, and when the difficulty arises they are powerless. From actual experiment I know the facts to be as stated. The pulse may be lowered or increased, or the first symptoms of paralysis produced, or fainting brought on, singing in the ears and mist before the eyes made to show themselves; but where is the corrective? Unknown, for the simple reason that when we are dealing with such forces as these we are out of the realm of general rules for correction and must be able to at once see the exact inner state of the person and to select unerringly out of the vast range of possible cures the right one so that it shall work without any mistake.

What, then, shall the querent do for herself and her children, as she asks? Use her best judgment, follow the best rules for the cure of diseases, train her children to be self-reliant and careful so that they shall have few accidents, teach them to avoid evil and danger and keep their minds and bodies in right condition, and karma will take care of the rest. And if they are hurt or really sick, then send for a good physician.

(The question and answer in this installment is reprinted from the January, 1892, issue of the *Theosophical Forum*.)

ARJUNA'S WEAPONS

THE occasion of the dialogue between Arjuna and Krishna in the *Bhagavad-Gita* is the battle undertaken by the Pandava prince. If the circumstances are an allegory clothing psychological and philosophical truths about man's dual nature and his pilgrimage through life, even the details may be expected to have significance. The idea of the battle itself, as a symbol of man's psychological and moral struggle, contains suggestive implications.

To engage in battle, in the classic sense, means, for one thing, to have determined to expose oneself to forces of the opposition and to confront them. The first consequence of this step for Arjuna is to find in dismay that the "enemy" is, in fact, a part of himself—that is, beloved friends, teachers, and companions of his childhood. Yet now he is called upon, as warrior and prince, to reduce these forces, that is, to eliminate them as causes. This means that, having put himself in the relationship of disciple to Krishna, he can no longer be governed by the elements of his nature which are "insufficient" for the task of ruling, however useful they may be in other capacities. By reason of his divine origin, his exalted station, and his own declarations, he must now alter his relationship to these lesser powers and faculties from one of dependence to that of direction and control. His duty is to regain his kingdom by asserting his right to rule and proving his ability to do so.

The confrontation and conquest are not to be accomplished by musing or reflection in quiet surroundings. The kingdom is to be regained only by *taking* it. We see, then, that the dialogue speaks to humanity in a compelling way. The time of preparation has passed with prior stages of evolution. In Kali Yuga, the results of human ignorance precipitate with ruthless speed and confront man in all their forbidding reality.

What are the weapons to be used in waging this battle? What preparation and training may we call upon in such a contest, which is between the higher and the lower self for the right to rule the life of man? Arjuna, who personifies the human mind, engages

in these dialogues with Krishna. It is he who, equipped with his famous bow, Gandiva, and skill in its use, surveys the battlefield; and then, sinking in despondency, seeks Krishna's advice.

If the battle is in reality the conquest of the forces of the lower nature, appropriate weapons need to be forged of knowledge gained by study and experience. Man's nature is partly transitory and partly eternal, and proficiency in the use of all his abilities depends upon the measure of universal understanding he can bring to the struggle. This understanding is the fruition of former engagements. The doctrines expounded by Krishna lead to understanding what we do and what happens to us, for the victory lies in action as the right application of knowledge. Not by belief, but by action, do we gain, as Arjuna gained, the first-hand knowledge that the presence of Krishna represents. Only by mastery of these doctrines in the darkest age can we learn to apply them with confidence and versatility. Thus may the battle be joined with awareness of its fullest meaning.

Could not such knowledge be more fittingly embodied in a peaceful metaphor, an allegory more expressive of harmony with the forces in nature? Why, for instance, were not the "weapons" chosen for this battle the tools used in the practice of wholesome agriculture? Such analogies are not lacking in the traditions of archaic instruction. But there is more than this to man's pilgrimage. His duty is not only to foster the knowledge already gained; there is also the task that awakening human self-consciousness alone is equal to—involving conquest of inferior forces by Manasic intelligence. The problem, then, is not only to learn, but to do, and in the doing, to transform.

Thus there is this symbolic war, the object of which is dominion over forces deemed to be "outside" ourselves. In the harvest of the learning which follows strenuous effort, insight comes with self-forgetfulness.

letters · questions · comment

Mr. Crosbie says in his letters in The Friendly Philosopher *that "the purpose of life is to learn and it is all made up of learning." However, the Theosophical teaching on evolution indicates that mankind in its origins is much greater, nobler, higher, than men are able to express in their present condition. Is the knowledge which we are here to gain, then, something that has been known before and is to be regained, or must it be newly created?*

If we consider knowledge to be a state of being or of mind, and not an object, a "thing" that can be owned, the alternatives suggested by the question tend to disappear. In short, to regain knowledge is, in a sense, to create it. This remains so even though what we learn is already known by many, having been discovered by others before. The thrill experienced by a child learning to read is not diminished by the fact that countless others have learned the same thing; gaining knowledge is always an act of creation for the individual.

Yet there do indeed seem to be two kinds of knowledge: that which has been long known and can be transmitted to others, and that which, by its very nature, must be discovered by each one for himself. The day-to-day learning suggested by Mr. Crosbie's comment seems to involve both.

There is the fact, easily discoverable, that we have within us the means to be wiser and nobler than our present action gives evidence of. We are beings of imagination and choice, and so of great potential power. But there is also the possibility that we are heirs to a life of the spirit undreamed of, unimagined in the scope of its perceptions and the reach of its vision. This is implied in the Buddha's exclamation, "The universe grows I."

Cultivating universal awareness on this plane of perception consists in the development of an instrument which can faithfully express the excellence of the spiritual man. This means that all the degrees of intelligence comprising the evolving nature of man must become responsive to the will of the higher ego. The archetype of this kind of growth is found in the childhood and youth

of the Buddha—the period in which he, the possessor of the greatest knowledge, had to regain it by making the lower principles bearers of this knowledge in its application to earthly experience.

In the constantly changing relationships of life the opportunity comes to create a bridge between what we now are and possibilities of which we are hardly aware. This bridge is made by constant effort to find the best application of principle in every situation. In a universe of law, the continual matching of effort with Karma must ultimately bring the resolution of every problem to the ego. Thus, in a universe of continuing evolution, the goal of perfectibility becomes a realistic objective for every human being.

In her article, "What Is Theosophy?", H.P.B. shows that the knowledge that is to be regained and that which is created are actually facets of the development, on this plane, of greater awareness. She says:

> Plotinus, the pupil of the "God-taught" Ammonius, tells us that the secret *gnosis* or the knowledge of Theosophy, has three degrees—opinion, science, and illumination. "The means or instrument of the first is sense, or perception; of the second, dialectics; of the third, intuition. To the last, reason is subordinate; it is *absolute knowledge*, founded on the identification of the mind with the object known." Theosophy is the exact science of psychology, so to say; it stands in relation to natural, uncultivated mediumship, as the knowledge of a Tyndall stands to that of a school-boy in physics. It develops in man a direct beholding; that which Schelling denominates "a realization of the identity of subject and object in the individual"; so that under the influence and knowledge of *hyponia* man thinks divine thoughts, views all things as they really are, and, finally, "becomes recipient of the Soul of the World," to use one of the finest expressions of Emerson. "I, the imperfect, adore my own perfect"—he says in his superb Essay on the *Oversoul.* Besides this psychological, or soul-state, Theosophy cultivated every branch of sciences and arts. It was thoroughly familiar with what is now commonly known as mesmerism. Practical theurgy or "ceremonial magic," so often resorted to in their exorcisms by the Roman Catholic clergy—was discarded by the theosophists. It is but Jamblicus alone who, transcending the other Eclectics, added to Theosophy the doctrine of Theurgy.

While we may associate old schools of philosophy with the past, their teachings survive in the tenets presented by Madame Blavatsky and Mr. Judge. Further, it is apparent that these ideas are not

the possession of some strange, exotic system. Viewed in the light of man's true nature, they can be recognized as expressive of higher common sense. In the *Key to Theosophy*, H.P.B. describes the practical foundation of a Theosophical education. She says:

> Children should above all be taught self-reliance, love for all men, altruism, mutual charity, and more than anything else, to think and reason for themselves. We would reduce the purely mechanical work of the memory to an absolute minimum, and devote the time to the development and training of the inner senses, faculties and latent capacities. We would endeavour to deal with each child as a unit, and to educate it so as to produce the most harmonious and equal unfoldment of its powers, in order that its special aptitudes should find their full natural development. We should aim at creating *free* men and women, free intellectually, free morally, unprejudiced in all respects, and above all things, *unselfish*. And we believe that much if not all of this could be obtained by *proper and truly theosophical* education.

How this applies to every experience of life is suggested in the following passage from *The Friendly Philosopher*:

> People in general do not get the *meaning* of what is written. in the same way that they do not extract the value from their experiences. They make surface deductions and applications only. So they have little ability to apply the philosophy to daily life, nor can they see its practical value. They have to be helped to assimilate the fundamental principles if they are to realize right valuations and applications. Each has to eradicate his own faults in these as in other directions—not the faults of others. Until students set to work seriously on these lines they cannot find surety nor happiness. Theosophy and its applications go together, if there is to be real progress.

If, as Plato said, learning is really the process of remembering, regaining knowledge results as each individual learns to look within himself, to find there the means to transform an ordinary life into a "higher" life. The soul knows "in principle." The regaining of soul-knowledge means "bringing it through" as a discovery for the illumination and refinement of our present psychic endowment, until the personality becomes a willing and obedient servant of the true man.

STUMBLING BLOCKS IN WORDS

A FELLOW student came to me the other day and asked, "What is the relation of 'space' to 'sat'? Is there any difference? In the *Secret Doctrine* I find that H.P.B., quoting from the disciples' catechism, says that 'space is that which is and ever was and is not created.' "

There is as much stumbling on mere words by students of Theosophy as on anything else. A simple word will often keep out the truth, and not only cause us to reach wrong conclusions, but frequently to enter upon disputes which sometimes end in quarrels. But in the question asked about "space" and "sat" there is an error in postulating "relation" for things which are without relation. "Sat" means being or *beness*, so it must be indivisible and unrelateable; "space" must be the same as "sat" because it is everywhere, being the one thing or aspect of things from which there is no escape. The moment we speak of "sat" or *beness,* we are forced to say that it exists somewhere, using the word "somewhere" in the abstract sense, and that "somewhere" is space. They cannot be dissociated from each other. So when I met the extract from the disciples' catechism in the *Secret Doctrine*, I at once came to the conclusion that "sat" is the word to metaphysically express the same idea as we have in mind when we think of space, the one being abstract existence and the other abstract locality in which to place the existence.

At one time some Theosophists were discussing the true sort of life and practise for a Theosophist. And one said that he thought that the body ought to be "cultivated." The rest at once entered into a discussion which lasted some time, during which the various arguments and illustrations of each were brought forward, when at the end it was suddenly discovered that there was not, in fact, any disagreement. The whole misunderstanding grew out of the one word "cultivation," which should have been "purification."

We should all be careful not only to use the right word to express the idea intended to be conveyed, but also to accurately

---

NOTE.—This article was first printed by Mr. Judge in the *Path* for August, 1890.

understand what is the idea the other person is trying to express, and to do this regardless of what words may have been used. In doing so it is absolutely necessary to remember what aspect the terms are being used in. Take "Jiva" for instance. It means life, and may be made to mean soul or ego. Mr. Sinnett has adopted Jiva to designate the mere life-principle of the human organism. But all through the metaphysical writings of the Hindoos we can find the word used to describe the immortal self. And there is no more confusion in these writings than there is in those of English speaking nations. Napoleon used to say that he paid attention to find out what idea might be behind anything that was said to him, and did not listen so much to the words as to the ideas which they were used to shadow forth. Words do no more than shadow forth the ideas, and a great deal depends upon the mental touch, taste, and power of smell of the person to whom the words are addressed. Remembering that there are such stumbling blocks as these in the way, the wise Theosophist will not be made fall.

—CADI.

THE DURABLE LEARNING

If the idea is held that there is but one life on earth, then all the learning of man and of the age is limited to a small and narrow range. But if one grasps the idea of successive lives on earth—all under Karma—then, the learning takes on a wider sweep, leading the man to the conception that all powers of every kind proceed from the Supreme, the Self of all creatures; that he himself is in reality a spiritual being, and must think and act as such.

We may not be able to apply, as fully as we and others might desire, all the axioms and reasoning of the philosophy; but what of that? We can apply what is possible and all that is possible to us, and in that application greater understanding and facility arise. Each one has to find *his* way. Words cannot give it, yet there *is* a way for each. Most of the trouble lies in trying to see, trying to hear, trying to "think" it all out, instead of applying what we *do* see. All ability comes very gradually, imperceptibly—felt, grasped, realized, rather than perceived in the ordinary sense.

—ROBERT CROSBIE

on the lookout

Humanists on Record

The Humanists, as represented principally by the American Humanist Association and the American Ethical Union, have published Humanist Manifesto II, which is intended to bring the earlier declaration of the Humanists, made in 1933—Humanist Manifesto I—up to date. Singled out by the *New York Times* (Aug. 26, 1973) for naming as signers of the new Manifesto are Andrei Sakharov, B. F. Skinner, Sidney Hook, Rabbi Mordecai Kaplan, Francis Crick, Isaac Asimov, John Ciardi, and Corliss Lamont. The *Times* report says that while the 1933 Manifesto was mainly a criticism of theism, the present one emphasizes throughout the freedom of the individual. Other points the *Times* selects as newsworthy Humanist affirmations are the "right to birth control, abortion, divorce, sexual freedom, euthanasia and privacy." Further:

> It [the Manifesto] urges increased participatory democracy, a minimum guaranteed annual income and universal education.
>
> It says war and nationalism are obsolete, calls for worldwide ecological planning and cautions against retreat from technology. It also rejects racial and ethnic "separations which set people and groups against each other," as well as "sexual chauvinism—male or female."

Other Themes

The concluding portion of the *Times* summary is mostly direct quotation:

> The manifesto declares that the "ultimate goal should be the fulfillment of the potential for growth in each human potentiality."
>
> Proclaiming a "positive declaration for times of uncertainty," the manifesto notes that many people today, "faced with apocalyptic prophecies and doomsday scenarios, flee in despair from reason and embrace irrational cults and theologies of withdrawal and retreat."
>
> "As in 1933, the humanists still believe that traditional theism, especially faith in the prayer-hearing God, assumed to

love and care for persons, to hear and understand their prayers and to be able to do something about them, is an unproved and outmoded faith.

"Salvationism, based on mere affirmation, still appears as harmful, diverting people with false hopes of heaven, hereafter," the statement declared, adding, "Reasonable minds look to other means for survival."

Lacking in Inspiration

What is to be said about this latest general statement of their most important convictions by the Humanists? Students of Theosophy have often felt themselves to have much in common with Humanists, and they do have attitudes in common, such as the rejection of dogmatic religion and emphasis on the brotherhood of all mankind. But the absence of philosophic conceptions of meaning—which makes the new Manifesto assert that Ethics is "situational," derived from "human need and interest"—shows the need for an intrinsically ennobling idea of man. Pennants celebrating abortion, divorce, and euthanasia are not likely to warm the allegiance of those who have an intuitive sense of the inwardness and elevation of the moral life, and whose spontaneous preoccupations reach far above the social demagogy of the times. Nor is the ardor of the Humanists for a "proper" technology likely to appeal to persons in whom transcendent longings are strong, but who find the churches too much wedded to the status quo and its hardly concealed materialism.

We Shall (Be) Overcome

The Manifesto seems to borrow from science-fiction when it says, in one place:

> We have virtually conquered the planet, explored the moon, overcome the natural limits of travel and communication; we stand at the dawn of a new age, ready to move farther into space and perhaps inhabit other planets. Using technology wisely, we can control our environment, conquer poverty, markedly reduce disease, extend our life-span, significantly modify our behavior, alter the course of human evolution and cultural development, unlock vast new powers, and provide humankind with unparalleled opportunity for achieving an abundant and meaningful life.

An intelligently guided technology may be able to do some of these things, but for modifying human behavior and determining

the course of evolution, surely other means are required. Technology is for the judicious manipulation and transformation of "things," and as a distinguished humanist once said, "Man is not a Thing." The humanists seem to have lost sight of a foundation verity of their credo.

Science Called to Witness

Moreover, while it is certainly right to disapprove dogmas put in the place of thought, a bias against philosophic conceptions of a life after death has no place in a genuinely open-minded stance. Godless Buddhism, after all, has an extensive literature on life beyond death—beyond many deaths—presented as a rational metaphysics. One can agree that "promises of immortal salvation or fear of eternal damnation are both illusory and harmful," since these destinies are hardly serviceable as "beliefs," nor can they be "given" to anyone, but this hardly justifies circulating what amounts to a prejudice *against* a soul existence.

The Manifesto says:

> Modern science discredits such historic concepts as the "ghost in the machine" and the "separable soul." Rather, science affirms that the human species is an emergence from natural evolutionary forces. As far as we know, the total personality is a function of the biological organism transacting in a social and cultural context. There is no credible evidence that life survives the death of the body. We continue to exist in our progeny and in the way that our lives have influenced others in our culture.

It is doubtless too much to expect modern Humanists to read thoughtfully Pico della Mirandola's great *Oration on the Dignity of Man*, as a reminder of what was once the foundation of humanist philosophy. Humanists sometimes wonder why their movement does not exercise greater influence. The answer may lie in a comparison of this Manifesto with themes to which great humanists have given voice.

"What's the Meaning and Purpose?"

Humanists and others who feel disturbed by the condition and direction of the modern world might learn something from the melancholy observations of James Reston, a syndicated writer with the *New York Times* whose discussion of the moral decline in American culture appeared in the *Santa Barbara* (Calif.) *News-*

Press for Aug. 26, 1973. Mr. Reston relates that the board of trustees of the Rockefeller Foundation recently assembled a group of eminent scholars to consider the "moral and ethical framework in which we are all living"—in our work, our relations with others, and with the world—"and what's the meaning and purpose of all this energy?" Mr. Reston quotes the scholars briefly, then observes:

> The tragedy is that all this sincere and careful analysis of our problems doesn't seem to lead anywhere. The people are left with the politicians and the reporters and the editorial writers and the thoughtful people at foundation meetings who do the best they can but in the end do not really answer the questions they raise.

Fundamental Questions Ignored

The specific question put to the group was why so many people feel isolated, pointless, and even helpless, "and whether it was possible to organize ways of talking, not only about legislation to avoid violence and corruption, but about morals and values, and the philosophical underpinnings of the whole thing." One of the participants, Irving Kristol, Mr. Reston says, made the central point: "That we should be discussing all kinds of fundamental questions that are being ignored in the public dialogue today." Picking up this idea, Reston says:

> My own view is that, while the American people today don't believe in the old institutions, and are confused by all this vague debate, [they] believe in believing in the old values and yearn for some practical way to escape from the isolation and impotence that troubles their lives. I also believe that there is a remnant in every institution in the nation, from the Congress to the churches to the universities or labor unions or chambers of commerce—that would welcome the chance to discuss the purpose of their work and lives, the "moral and ethical framework," if only somebody would give them a lead on how to do it, and define the questions for discussion.

Mr. Reston doesn't explain why these "remnants" in the old institutions haven't done this before, or made noticeable attempts in this direction. It may be that the windows or other apertures in their structures look out on the wrong scene of possibilities—that what is visible from where they stand leads only to repetition of what has been said before. But perhaps Mr. Reston is a useful spokesman for his time, since he does show that certain notable thinkers among us are saying to each other and to him that they—

we—don't really know what to do. "We wouldn't know how to build a good country," Robert Goheen told the Rockefeller Foundation trustees, "if we were confident what 'good' means." And he added: "We want to do the right thing but too often have trouble agreeing on what right means." One might say that it is "good" to make admissions like that in days like these. The question of what to do about it, however, remains unanswered.

A Demeaning Image

Sigmund Koch, who teaches psychology and philosophy at Boston University, writes in criticism of a trend in humanistic psychology which he finds both dangerous psychologically and harmful philosophically. First, he speaks of the conception of man produced by behavioristic psychology:

> But what is perhaps worse than any single symptom of psychological science, is the demeaning image of man himself at the basis of its presumably tough-minded conceptualizations, an image that mankind cannot but accept and strive to emulate because of its associations with the iconography of science. In its austere form, it depicts man as a stimulus-response mechanism or, worse, a mere mathematical point of intersection between stimulus and response processes, and steered by socially "manipulated" rewards and punishments. According to this form of the image, the laws of human and social "behavior" can be derived from rigorous study of the variables controlling the rate at which a hungry rat in a small, dark box presses a lever to obtain tiny pellets of food. The more sophisticated and recent form of the image holds man to be an information-processing entity operating on the principles of a binary digital computer programmed to conform to payoff criteria similar to the rewards of the previous case.

Vulgarizing Reality

This is both accurate and devastating, and sufficient to account for the demand that psychology break with the mechanistic sort of science that is wholly incapable of recognizing the higher qualities of human beings. However, Mr. Koch finds the tendencies of the reacting branch of psychology equally disturbing. He turns to criticism of encounter groups, feeling that they often lead the participant into "reducing, distorting, evading and vulgarizing his own reality." He finds the encounter group typically a "maneuver of evading human reality in the very process of seeking to discover and enhance it." The shy or reticent individual—and his reticence

may be natural and good—is subjected to group pressure to be "open," and the goal of openness, Koch believes, becomes little more than the requirement of *transparency*, of holding back no intimacy or confidence. And this, he says, is "to provide access to experience by reducing it to a packaged commodity; to engineer autonomy by group pressure; to liberate individuality by group shaping." There is neglect of the vision of man and the human condition to be found in the classics of the humanities—a vision which must be earned and striven for, and is hard to come by.

Out of Contact

The encounter group is likely to ignore the need for these lonely labors:

> The autisms of those who want it the *easy* way have put them out of touch with the differentiated content of the significant visions in man's heritage; worse, they are out of contact with the intricate and delicately contoured meanings of some of the best—as well as some of the plainest—words in our language. They nevertheless use these words incessantly with the best of intensions, but in debased, vulgarized, schematic ways. For them, words like openness, honesty, awareness, freedom, trust, growth, feeling, experience, form a simplistic conceptual abacus which they manipulate and apply in mechanical, repetitive, incantatory fashion. To convince people who reside within this framework of its impoverished character is like asking for a change of sensibility.

Lack of Moral Foundation

One may recognize, in these tendencies, not any special weakness in psychologists, but rather the general cultural and philosophical impoverishment of the times, and the common expectation of quick results, similar to the "productivity" in other branches of human endeavor. The moral values of the age are grounded in little more than vague intuitions, and they seem wholly incapable of changing the prevailing motive of the "pursuit of happiness" and the measuring of experience by the amount of pleasurable feeling it produces. The abyss which Mr. Judge spoke of as separating Western from Eastern psychology still exists: Eastern psychology is concerned with both the moral and the mental states, while Western psychology studies only the mental states. And there can hardly be a moral psychology without substantial conceptions relating to the enduring ego and the process of human

development through reincarnation. The founders of Humanistic psychology were thinkers possessed of strong moral intuitions, but those who have come later seem unable to continue their work with the same high inspiration for a guide.

Omnipresent Life-Support

The Long Beach (Calif.) *Press-Telegram* (Oct. 30, 1973) reports George Wald, a Harvard scientist, as saying that some of the basic elements in the universe are capable of supporting life under a great variety of conditions. Hydrogen and helium, the main ingredients of stars, can produce life-sustaining materials such as carbon, nitrogen and oxygen, and are the most plentiful elements in the universe. A strange property of water, he said, is that, formed into ice, it floats. If it didn't water would freeze from the bottom and never thaw, thus making the process irreversible. Likewise, a curious characteristic of every atomic element is that protons and electrons are charged equally:

> If protons and electrons did not possess equal electronic charges, there could be no life in the universe because everything would die of electrocution.
>
> Because the universe expands, there is darkness in space, Wald said. Life cannot begin in a constantly incandescent environment.
>
> "Ours is a universe permeated with life. It is a universe that breeds life, inevitably, in many places, given enough time."

These remarks suggest growing acceptance of the idea that, whatever the conditions requisite for life, motion in terms of alternation or periodicity is a fundamental principle in manifestation and is not limited to any particular set of conditions.

The State of the Nation

The melancholy thoughts of Henry Steele Commager, a noted historian who teaches at Amherst College, are recorded in the *Los Angeles Times* of last Nov. 18, in a comparison of present-day American men of affairs with the leaders who took part in the nation's founding. He begins:

> Two centuries ago, when the emerging United States had a population smaller than that of metropolitan Detroit today, the political landscape was thronged with the most distinguished group of statesmen any modern nation has ever produced in one generation. Today, with a population of more than 200

million, the most conspicuous feature on the political landscape is its desolation.

A meager people, scattered over a vast area, without great cities, without a capitol, without familiar institutions of church and state and university and the learned professions, in one long generation produced Benjamin Franklin and George Washington, John Adams and Samuel Adams, Thomas Jefferson and Alexander Hamilton, James Madison and James Wilson, John Marshall and Thomas Paine, and a score of others scarcely less eminent.

The Suspicious Present

Whether by chance or design, Mr. Commager, in listing what was lacking in the early days of the Republic, names just those social institutions which are now regarded as the chief means to improvement or cultural regeneration. A more devoted church, with more loyal congregations, better and more responsible government, universities and colleges offering more thorough and "relevant" education—these resources are what we must look to for help and hope, we are told. Yet without them, the generation of the Founding Fathers, Mr. Commager says, originated and established a new form of government designed to correct the flaws in Old World sovereignties, and which did just that, setting limits to arbitrary governmental power and providing workable safeguards for the rights of the people. To which, in the realm of political institutions, our own generation—or the past three or four generations—added nothing worth mentioning, except, perhaps, as Commager dryly notes, "secrecy"!

Athenian Ideals

What spurred the men of the late eighteenth century to such high and diverse achievements, in a land apparently barren of cultural attainments? While Mr. Commager thinks the hope of being remembered by "posterity" played a part, he also speaks of their sense of obligation to posterity, which is today an almost forgotten feeling. But he also says:

Most of the leaders of the 18th century had been educated in the classics. They had read Plato's sagacious observation that "what is honored in a country will be cultivated there," and they could recall that proud boast of Pericles in his great funeral oration to the Athenians that "our citizens attend both to public and private duties, and do not allow absorption in

> their own affairs to interfere with the knowledge of their city's. We differ from other states in regarding the man who holds aloof from public life not as quiet but as useless."

Mr. Commager believes that concentration on self-serving private enterprise has led to a general indifference to the public interest and good, to the extent that business goals have distorted all aspects of American life, including education and the arts.

"Too Much" to Hope For?

Thinking of the contrast between this state of mind and the spirit of two hundred years ago, he asks: "What can be done to revive the passion for public service that animated the generation of the Founding Fathers? Nothing perhaps but changes in the general climate of opinion in the country." From this broad suggestion he moves to such devices as providing greater monetary rewards for public service and attempting "to make it impossible for a candidate for any office to buy an election." But these are frail reeds on which to base the renascence he would like to see. In his conclusion he returns to the melancholy mood of his opening observations:

> As for changing the climate of opinion, that is, needless to say, more difficult. It could at least be encouraged by a return to the teachers of those great wellsprings of literature—many of them in the Aegean and the Mediterranean seas—which nourished the minds and spirits of the Founding Fathers.
>
> But that, perhaps, is too much to hope for.

Missing—Then and Now

Perhaps so. Dr. Hutchins made a heroic effort to revive vital interest in the classics, for much the same reasons, but found only a few allies, although those who responded to his proposals found the study of the Great Books well worth the effort. Meanwhile, we may recall the prophetic comment of William Q. Judge (in *Notes on the Bhagavad-Gita*) concerning the tendencies which have come to such ugly fruition in recent years:

> In Europe individualism is somewhat tempered by various monarchical forms of government which do not by any means cure the evil; and in America, being totally unrestrained and forming in fact the basis of independence here, it has culminated. Its bad effects—vaguely as yet shadowing the horizon—might have been avoided if the doctrines of the Wisdom-Religion had been also believed in by the founders of the

> republic. And so, after the sweeping away of the fetters forged by priestly dogma and kingly rule, we find springing up a superstition far worse than that which we have been used to call by the name. It is the superstition of materialism that bows down to a science which leads only to a negation.

Tennessee's New Law

Another kind of political religion has just been given official status by the legislature of Tennessee, which has voted into authority a new "anti-evolution" law to replace the statute on the basis of which John T. Scopes was convicted and fined for teaching Darwinism in 1925. The old law was repealed in 1967. The new provision reads:

> Any biology textbook used for teaching in the public schools which expresses an opinion of, or relates to a theory about origins or creation of man and his world shall be prohibited from being used as a textbook in such system unless it specifically states that it is a theory as to the origin and creation of man and his world and is not represented to be scientific fact.

If the measure passed had ended here, there could really be little objection to it, since the ape-origin theory of Darwin is indeed a theory, and while it almost certainly has the support of the great majority of scientists, there have been some dissenting voices among them, in this century as well as in Darwin's time. Readers of *The Secret Doctrine* are familiar with the objections raised by de Quatrefages (II, 682-83) and some others, and such authorities as Henry Fairfield Osborn, Franz Weidenreich, and Frederic Wood Jones in this century have shown that other views deserve consideration from even a scientific point of view.

"Equal Time"?

However, the Tennessee law continues:

> Any textbook so used in the public education system which expresses an opinion or relates to a theory or theories shall give in the same text book and under the same subject commensurate attention to, and an equal amount of emphasis on, the origins and creation of man and his world as the same is recorded in other theories including, but not limited to, the Genesis account in the Bible. . . .

The foregoing is quoted from a report in *Science* for Nov. 16, 1973, in which it is said that the National Association of Biology Teachers has retained counsel to challenge the Tennessee statute

in the courts. Conceivably, the objection of the teachers would be less determined if the law did not require teachers in Tennessee to use texts in which science is matched with religious myth or "revelation." This mixing of science with allegory, in a "competitive" relation, is anti-educational. Even some of the Senators in Tennessee are embarrassed by the law, which is said to have been passed without debate because the voting was covered by national TV cameras. A Tennessee newspaper editorialized: "If the senators are such a source of embarrassment to themselves, think of what they are to the rest of the state."

An Intelligent Comparison

One suspects that any text capable of satisfying the authors of this law will prove totally unsatisfactory to the biology teachers. However, it is not impossible to carry out the spirit of the measure, and do it in good taste, since a book which accomplishes something like this has been in print for a number of years. *New Views of Evolution*, by George Perrigo Conger, was published by Macmillan in 1929. It summarizes various doctrines of evolution, then, as a last chapter, provides a critical estimate of Evolutionism. Under the subheading, "Evolution, Theology, and Religion," there is this passage:

> The . . . specifically Christian doctrine of the origin of the world, although this . . . was developed from non-Christian sources, is found in the fourth chapter of the Fourth Gospel. The Fourth Gospel, or Gospel of John, like the Book of Genesis, opens with the words "In the beginning," and presents an account of the origin of the world; the Gospel account, although in some translations it employs the terms of creationism, is more open to evolutionist interpretations. Behind it evidently is the old Gnostic philosophy of some of the ancient cults, according to which the world originates by a succession of "emanations," or, as we might say, expressions or radiations, from God, Who is the primary source of everything.

"Through" the Logos

> The first expression or radiation, according to the Gospel, is "The Word" (Logos), which we may understand as a kind of reasonableness or intelligibility in things. It is that quality in the Universe which makes us able to understand it and talk about it. But it is not merely a formal quality; there is also something dynamic about it. According to the Gospel in the King James version, "all things were *made*" by this Word; but

> in the original Greek the root idea is rather that all things *become*, or "came into being through" the Word. Further on, in the translation, it is said that "the Word was made flesh," where again the word which may be translated "became" occurs in the original. In other words, the Gospel account can be read in terms of a cosmic tendency, the Word, or Logos, or Reasonableness, working through the developing Universe and even becoming incarnate in Jesus.

In this book, under "Some Philosophies of Evolution," the Plotinian teaching of the Gnostic doctrine of emanations is given briefly. The consequences of reading such a book might be a broadened idea of the possible meanings of evolution, and a more reasonable interpretation of Biblical teachings. Instruction in various creation myths, as such, and not as "science," might be considered, although providing such materials without adequate interpretations would probably prove comparatively useless. In any event, the pursuit of education under the religio-political compulsions obvious in the Tennessee law can hardly be of much benefit to the children. And the second paragraph of the law, quoted above, opens the door to tacit violation of the first amendment.

Borderland Medical Science

A recent dispatch from Washington, D.C., tells of an effort by the National Science Foundation to measure precisely the magnetic fields of the human body as a means of learning more about difficult-to-diagnose diseases. Heart afflictions, epilepsy, and brain tumor are among the ills which are thought to alter the magnetic fields of the body. While electric currents produced by the body have long been used in diagnosis, and brain waves and electrocardiograms are well known in medical research, the use of bodily magnetic fields as a diagnostic tool for doctors is said to be in its infancy. Perhaps, by the methods with which magnetic fields are examined, it becomes possible to catch the reflection or "shadow" of astral or pranic curents, and this might well give some measure of the disturbance to organic function. In any event, it seems certain that many secrets of health lie hidden in the "fields" of the organism, which are surely more astral than physical, despite the fact that electricity and magnetism are regarded as "physical" phenomena by the science of the times.